

## Claims

I claim:

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A<sup>5</sup> 1. A method for using a computer system to permit a reader of a text that is presented on a computer display controlled by the computer system to optimize the rate at which text is presented, comprising the steps of:

10 determining the location on the computer display at which text is being read aloud by the reader; and

varying the rate at which text is presented in response to the result of the location-determining step.

15 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

defining a cursor location as a location on the display corresponding to the location at which text is being read aloud;

20 defining a neutral zone as at least one region of the display at which reading preferably takes place;

25 defining at least one region of the display as a deceleration zone, associated with the presentation of text which comes before the text displayed in the neutral zone at

any given time, such that when the defined cursor signifies a location within a deceleration zone, the rate of text presentation decreases according to a mathematical function of the distance between the location signified by the cursor and the neutral zone; and

defining at least one region of the display as an acceleration zone, associated with the presentation of text which comes after the text displayed in the neutral zone at any given time, such that when the defined cursor signifies a location within an acceleration zone, the rate of text presentation increases according to a mathematical function of the distance between the location signified by the cursor and the neutral zone.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining a region of the display as a neutral zone, such that the rate of text presentation does not change appreciably when the text being read aloud is displayed in a neutral zone.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining input to the computer system that stops continued scrolling of the text.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the input to the computer

system that stops continued scrolling of the text comprises defining at least one region of the display as a stop zone, such that when a defined cursor signifies a stop zone, further scrolling of text ceases.

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6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining input to the computer system that causes the text to scroll backwards.

10 7. The method of claim 3, wherein changes in the rate of text presentation depend on a function of the distance between the location at which text is being read aloud and a neutral zone.

15 8. The method of claim 3, wherein the rate of text presentation depends on a function of distance between the location at which text is being read aloud and a neutral zone.

20 9. The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of defining at least one zone graphically.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of defining at least one zone by using a cursor control device to specify its limits and shape.

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11. The method of claim 2, wherein at least one zone is

differentiated from other zones by differing attributes of characters displayed within the at least one zone.

12. The method of claim 2, wherein at least one zone is  
5 differentiated from other zones by differing attributes of the display background within the at least one zone.

13. The method of claim 2, wherein the location of at least one  
10 zone may be changed depending on the location at which text is being read.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the location at which text is  
being read is determined by use of voice recognition software.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the computer system  
determines the location at which text is being read aloud by  
comparing what is said with what is written in the  
electronic text.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the text is supplied over a  
network.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein information about the  
25 location at which text is being read aloud is provided over a network.

18. The method of claim 2, wherein the cursor is not presented on a display device.

5 19. A computer memory storage device encoded with a computer program for using a computer system to display electronic text comprising:

means for determining the location on the computer display  
10 at which text is being read aloud by the reader; and

means for varying the rate at which text is presented in response to the result of the location-determining step.

15 20. A computer system for displaying electronic text comprising:

a display device controlled by the computer, said display device imaging a portion of said text controlled by the computer system;

20 means for determining the location on the computer display at which text is being read aloud by the reader; and

25 means for varying the rate at which text is presented in response to the result of the location-determining step.